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FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS, THE LESBIAN AND GAY WEEKLY

Marines take the heat

Hundreds of angry protesters gather outside a D.C. barracks to decry anti-gay violence and to charge the leathernecks with "multi-faceted bias-related crimes...from epithets to homicide"

By John Zeh

WASHINGTON — Over 400 whistle-blowers picketed the U.S. Marine barracks located southeast of the U.S. Capitol July 6 to "take back the night" from hate-motivated violence after a group of Marines assaulted three gay men outside a gay bar three weeks earlier.

Protestors rallied at the Eastern Market subway stop and confronted military families and friends at the compound's weekly "Torchlight Tattoo" parade. The group then marched to the First District police station to protest "Marine rampages" on Capitol Hill.

Shouting "shame, shame," protesters said the barracks should be shut down if Marines can't behave in the diverse community. At least one woman was arrested

Marines." The assailants kicked and pummeled the bar patrons, knocking two unconscious, witnesses reported. It was the latest in several attacks by Marines on gay and lesbian establishments and customers over the last decade.

D.C. police called the attack a "bar brawl," rather than a hate-motivated crime that would be given special consideration under D.C.'s new law protecting victims of bias-related attacks. The U.S. Attorney's office, which prosecutes felonies in the city, decided not to press charges. Marine officials found two Marines guilty of disorderly conduct, "a slap on the wrist," according to Donald AuCoin of Oppression Under Target! (OUT!), which organized the protest. "It's wholly inadequate."



Queers fighting back in D.C., July 6

for "not being peaceful," said a rally organizer.

"We will not tolerate activities and the presence of violent, homo-hating skinheads, no matter what kind of uniform they wear," said Sue Hyde of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). "Nazi brownshirts, skinhead tee shirts, leatherneck fatigues — get them out of the neighborhood. We will not be the Marines' punching bags any longer."

D.C. City Council candidate and AIDS clinic administrator Jim Harvey said he marched to show his "indignation" against Marines' disrespect for gays, lesbians, Black people, and the city. "They should have been gone a long time ago."

About 3 a.m. on June 17, three gay men leaving the Remingtons bar on Pennsylvania Avenue SE were jumped by about a dozen Marines shouting "Kill the fags" and "Go

"Semper fie? It's a lie. You don't care if people die," marchers across Eighth Street shouted as the crowd entered the compound, guarded by Marines in dress-blue uniforms, for a swing jazz concert. Mimicking Marine chants, some cried, "I don't know if it's been said, U.S. Marines give good head." One activist carried a sign saying "U.S. Moron Corps."

With a call to "stop all anti-lesbian and anti-gay violence," the direct action group OUT! issued five demands:

- D.C. police must classify the bashing as a hate-motivated crime and the U.S. Attorney prosecute under the new law;
- Marine Commandant Al Gray must acknowledge "on-going Marine antipathy" toward gay men and lesbians and condemn Marine violence against them;

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In The Center:
An interview with author Michael Nava



In Hindsight:
**TEN YEARS OF
BLACK AND WHITE
MEN TOGETHER**

AIDS Project Worcester abandons leather outreach

The volunteer director of Leatherforce 2000 claims that personal qualms of the new director of the city's largest AIDS service organization have left the S/M outreach group stranded

By Laura Briggs

WORCESTER, Mass. — Under the leadership of a new acting director, AIDS Project Worcester (APW) recently severed its ties to an AIDS education program for gay men and lesbians in the leather/SM community. While some say the move was intended to be temporary and reflected only a problem with the administrative organization of the project, others believe that the program was discontinued because the acting director, who is a Roman Catholic nun, is hostile to the target community.

The program, Leather Force 2000, was largely run by volunteer Alan Chiras. The program is the only one in New England specifically targetting the leather/SM community.

According to Chiras, on June 15, just 11 days after the appointment of Anne Marie Kane as acting director and only two weeks before an event he had been organizing for months, Chiras was told to stop doing his AIDS prevention work in the name of APW. Chiras said that Kane told him that his outreach was incompatible with the goals of APW. He said he believes that his project was discontinued because Kane "was unresponsive to the idea of bar outreach in general and to the leather/SM community in particular."

Macey Goodman, vice president of the APW Board of Directors, has a much different account of what occurred and why. "There was a perceived organizational problem that had nothing to do with the content of the project," he said. Goodman said that unlike other volunteers, Chiras was accountable directly to the executive director, rather than to a staff member who would then be under the administration of the executive director. "The project was not terminated; [Kane] would have had no authority to do that," he said.

According to Goodman, there have been

no philosophical or policy changes since Kane's appointment, despite her close affiliation with the Catholic Church. The Church has condemned homosexuality and opposed safer sex education and the use of condoms for AIDS prevention. "There is absolutely, positively, nothing philosophical against condom distribution" at APW, Goodman told GCN. Goodman also said that in cases of philosophical differences between Catholic Church teaching and APW, he expected Kane would put aside Church doctrine and work within the framework of APW. "I certainly would not want someone to be selected as director because they were Catholic. On the other hand, I would be distraught if someone who is Catholic could not be director because that person is Catholic," he said.

Kane was on vacation and unavailable for comment.

The former director of APW, John Sakowicz, who is now the director of the Cape Cod AIDS Council, called Kane's treatment of Chiras "appalling." Sakowicz told GCN that while he was director, "We had the highest regard for Alan and his work. He hustled for money, and he got out there and did the work. The leather community is one of the most under-served groups in this epidemic. [Chiras] is practically the only one working in that community in this area," he said.

Sakowicz said that while he was the one to nominate Kane to the Board of Directors in the first place, he was alarmed by the choice of Kane for the dual administrative roles of President of the Board and acting director of the agency. When the Board elected Kane as president only three months after she was appointed to the Board (because she had the time and willingness to

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Quote of the week

"Homophobic, sexist and racist commentaries are *lies*. It's 1990, boys, and we're not going to take it anymore."

— *Totally out-there lesbian monologist Reno, in a discussion of the turning tides of popularity for frat-boy comic drones Andrew "Dice" Clay, Eddie Murphy and Sam Kinison, in The Advocate.*

Mass gay rights law victory celebrated

BOSTON — Approximately 150 gay rights law supporters celebrated victory in the Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) with a July 6 rally held at Government Center. Cosponsored by the Progressive Caucus of the Campaign to Defend the Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Law and the Steering Committee to Protect the Lesbian and Gay Rights Law, the rally provided gay rights activists with a forum to hail the July 5 ruling by the SJC, which declared a referendum repeal attempt by right-wing opponents of the law unconstitutional. However, rally speakers also stressed that the gay rights law was "only a beginning," and that the court decision freed activists to work on other important lesbian and gay issues, including anti-gay violence.

Even as advocates celebrated, some cautioned that the fight to preserve the gay rights law is not yet over. Emcee Susan Moir warned that Citizens for Family First — the most vocal of the conservative opponents — is almost certain to attempt to file an initiative petition in 1992, which could place the gay rights law on the ballot. In addition, the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus distributed leaflets describing an attempt by anti-gay state Rep. Marie Parente (D-Milford) to attach a non-binding referendum on the gay rights law to a budget bill. The amendment never reached the house floor for a vote.

In a related development, Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) recently filed two complaints alleging anti-gay discrimination. A complaint filed in June on behalf of Humberto Garcia, a Chicano gay man, alleges that he was fired in January from Danvers State Hospital. According to Garcia's complaint, he was fired because of racist and homophobic charges allegedly levelled against him by a fellow employee that stated that Garcia was "sitting in the staff area very, very lazily" with his fly down. In the complaint registered with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, Garcia stated that he believes the charges were fabricated, most probably by his supervisor Nancy Therriault. According to Garcia, Therriault had previously called him a "fucking faggot" and had told a coworker that he was "fucking stupid" because she believed his English skills were inadequate.

GLAD filed a complaint with the Boston Human Rights Commission in July accusing a Boston Police officer of assaulting a gay man and screaming "faggot" at him after stopping him for a routine traffic matter. Joseph Trovato alleged that police officer Matthew Kervin threatened him, handcuffed him to a police station wall, and harassed him after accusing him of drunk driving. Trovato was released by police after he passed a breath-alcohol test.

□ Laura Briggs

Suspect in New Hampshire lesbian murders freed

CONCORD, N.H. — A man suspected of murdering two Nashua lesbians was released July 10 after his ease went through three mistrials while he was held for 22 months without bail.

Police claim that the 22-year old man, Anthony Barnaby, had admitted to helping his friend David Caplin murder Barnaby's lesbian neighbors Charlene Ranstrom and Brenda Warner because he "loathed their lifestyle," according to the *Boston Globe*.

Barnaby later recanted the confession, claiming that Nashua police coerced the statements from him during a 20-hour interrogation period. Although Barnaby's statements were allowed as evidence in all three of his trials, little other evidence was

presented by prosecutors. Each jury in the three trials deadlocked before reaching a verdict.

Nashua police Deputy Chief Clifton Largy said of Barnaby's release, "I haven't seen anything like this in my 23 years here. It's very depressing."

Prosecutors are now focusing on Caplin, claiming that only in the last month have they obtained substantial evidence to charge him with murder in the case. Caplin is being held without bail at the Hillsborough House of Correction.

Even if new evidence is uncovered that would further implicate Barnaby — who claimed throughout his trials that he was passed out drunk at the time of the murders — it is unlikely that the state would seek an unprecedented fourth trial. Prosecutors also acknowledged that extraditing Barnaby from a Micmac Indian reservation in Quebec, where he resides, "may be difficult, to be sure."

□ Christopher Wittke

Squatting in Cambridge

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Four families — including one lesbian couple — occupied a vacant building here on July 2. The owner of the building, John McAdams, has refused to rent the building's four rent controlled apartments, despite orders from the Cambridge Rent Control Board to do so. The new "tenants" have established an escrow account to hold rent payments until they are given leases.

The action has been supported by a variety of local groups, including Cambridge Eviction Free Zone, the Cambridge Rainbow Coalition, and New England War Tax Resistance. Supporters and neighbors have helped the squatters remove garbage and animal waste, fix plumbing, and keep the building secure through late-night patrols. For more information, contact Cambridge Eviction Free Zone at 868-2900.

□ Laura Briggs

Skinheads ransack gay bar in German soccer riot

EAST BERLIN — A night of rioting across East and West Germany that had started out as a rowdy celebration of West Germany's World Cup Soccer tournament victory over Rome left four people dead and hundreds injured, including the patrons of one gay bar.

In West German cities including Hamburg and Bielefeld, neo-Nazis attacked foreigners and police. In East Berlin about 500 skinheads descended on the city's main square, Alexanderplatz, where they terrorized Vietnamese workers and trashed a bar that is "frequented by homosexuals," according to the *Boston Globe*.

□ Christopher Wittke

Queer credit cards available

SEATTLE, Wash. — The Pride Foundation, "a community organization for gay men, lesbians and their friends," has struck an agreement with the Seafirst Bank here to offer the first nationally available lesbian and gay Visa and MasterCard credit cards.

According to *Lesbian Resource Center Community News*, the Pride Foundation will receive a service fee for each new credit card issued, as well as one-half of one percent of credit card balances between \$1000 and \$10,000 or \$5-7 monthly from each account.

In its five years of existence, the Pride Foundation has granted \$150,000 to national agencies and those in the Puget Sound region that provide direct AIDS care, AIDS research, human services, and arts/cultural and recreational programs.

For more information on the "Charge With Pride" program, the Pride Foundation office can be reached at (206) 323-3318.

□ Christopher Wittke

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Teachers' union passes les/gay resolutions

Educators are urged to sensitize themselves to the specialized needs of gay and lesbian staff and students

By John Zeh

BOSTON — Gay and lesbian school staff and students won "educational equity" with heterosexual peers here July 2-6 when the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) union adopted a slate of 11 resolutions affirming their rights.

"It's a success, not a victory," said Paul Thomas, AFT's National Gay and Lesbian Caucus founder, "because there was no fight."

Some 3,300 convention delegates agreed by voice votes to:

- include sexual orientation in AFT's anti-discrimination protections;
- urge union locals to bargain for those policies and bereavement leave for domestic partners;
- condemn harassment or violence against students due to sexual orientation; and
- protect rights of students and staff who have Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

"They all sailed right through, with only one lone voice of dissent," said new caucus co-chair Dan Stephen, a delegate of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers. "He did us a favor. Everyone could see his position was homophobic."

Groundwork for passage was laid two years ago at AFT's biannual session in San Francisco. Similar bids failed because of improper wording, but Thomas networked within AFT to learn acceptable language. "The votes put a major union on record as being supportive of the rights of lesbian and gay school staff and students who deserve a gay-affirmative educational environment," said Stephen.

The campaign's best benefit, said new caucus co-chair Jan Lenz, was the chance to educate so many fellow teachers about gay and lesbian issues. According to Thomas, "They heard the 'G' and 'L' words so much, if it bothered anyone before, they were used to it by when we got done."

"Teachers need to be aware of our own language and not use, or allow, words like fag or dyke," said Lenz, who teaches at Cincinnati's Sands Montessori School. "We raised people's consciousness about an invisible minority. It feels like we really made some progress."

Educators can assume that 10-15 percent of adolescents are gay or lesbian and have trouble understanding their sexual identity/orientation, according to research by the University of Cincinnati's John Mad-dux. Research found that students who are lesbian- or gay-identified have significant problems in school, such as peer harassment, violence, and verbal assaults. Some teachers use pejorative language and

humor, or don't discourage classroom-based homophobia and at-large oral attacks.

Lenz and other caucus members staffed a table in the huge convention hall's lobby to canvass delegates. According to Lenz, a broad array of people visited the table, among them "members of P-FLAG, gay men, lesbians, concerned straights, and teachers who said they teach gay or lesbian kids — and need to find out more information about them. Everybody seemed very positive about what we were doing, [but] thousands walked on by."

Despite this indifference, AFT amended its constitution to invalidate the charter of any union or local limiting its membership on account of sexual orientation, which Thomas battled to substitute for "preference."

At his urging, the union condemned pre-judicial action against students and supported their "right to an affirmative, positive, equitable, and safe education environment." The resolution was based on a 1988 University of Pennsylvania study that showed a sharp increase in harassment and violence in schools against students based on identified, or perceived, sexual orientation.

The resolution also acknowledged AFT's awareness of educators' "increasing efforts nationwide to ensure fair, representative treatment of gay and lesbian people [in] ongoing curricular revision, instructional media/resources selection, counseling services, and staff development."

AFT also voted to "support efforts to defend employment rights of employees with HIV" and to protect students with it against discrimination.

"Gay and lesbian youth look and are like everyone else," Lenz said during her speech. "But they have no role models at school because teachers [won't] come out to them, nor tell them that [many] people they study in social studies and English were gay."

In support of a bereavement resolution offered by United Educators of San Francisco, Lenz said she shouldn't have to pretend or lie to get time off work if anything happens to her partner of four years.

Teacher-delegates at the convention were subjected to the same treatment they dispense to their minions — homework and a pop quiz. "How many know what it feels like to be attracted to somebody?" said Dan Stephen, a special education teacher at Cincinnati's Rosenberg Elementary. "Very good! Think back to where you first were

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LINDA HAAS

Vigil for abortion rights

BOSTON — Sporting buttons that said "Pro-Union, Pro-Choice," "A Woman's Life is a Human Life," and "Silence = Death," 600 abortion rights demonstrators conducted a candlelight march through a downtown back alley and up to the State House on July 5th. The march was held to commemorate the women's lives lost in unsafe, illegal abortions since the Supreme Court's restrictive Webster decision of July 3rd last year.

On the State House steps, Boston NOW President Ellen Convisser told the crowd "A states' rights approach to a woman's right to abortion is lethal....We are here to commemorate the lives of poor women who could not afford to purchase their rights." Convisser also noted the large increase nationwide in legislation that would restrict the reproductive rights of poor women and young women. Lesbian activist Margaret Cerullo, who spoke after Convisser, received loud applause when she told the crowd "The issue of abortion calls up the image of young women whose sexuality is out of control. But I say 'Out of whose control?'"

Cerullo and speaker Charlene Gilbert, co-chair of Women for Economic Justice and a member of Women of Color for Reproductive Freedom, both stated that the issue of women's choice has been artificially limited by the abortion rights debate. They stressed that poverty and other forms of oppression limit women's reproductive health and life choices. Calling for the right to good pre-natal care, housing, and meaningful work opportunities, Gilbert told the crowd "To talk about choice without talking about the broad spectrum of choices and limits is to not talk about choice at all."

Gubernatorial and Lt. Gubernatorial hopefuls Evelyn Murphy and Marjorie Clapprood also addressed the rally, as did attorney Jamie Sabino, who assists young women through the judicial bypass procedure which allows them to obtain abortions without parental consent.

As at many abortion rights demonstrations, the march and rally included a strong lesbian presence. Marcher Felicity Harper noted "Reproductive freedom has been broadly defined. It's about having more rights than just abortion rights." Several other lesbian activists present added that "Pro-choice rallies are a good place to cruise girls."

□ Liz Galst

State nixes condom ad endorsement

Governor Dukakis and the Mass. Department of Public Health refuse to okay a series of public advertisements promoting condoms as an AIDS preventative

By Laura Briggs

BOSTON — In a move that has outraged AIDS service providers and activists, the Dukakis administration has withdrawn authorization to use the endorsement by the Department of Public Health of an ad campaign promoting condom use to prevent the transmission of AIDS. While the Secretary of Human Services maintains that state government has not backed away from its pledge to launch an "aggressive, visible" campaign for AIDS prevention, as quoted in the *Boston Globe* in May, activists charge that the Dukakis administration is afraid to publicly associate itself with condom use.

According to AIDS Action Committee (AAC) Director Larry Kessler, the administration has requested and received information about the effectiveness of condoms for AIDS prevention. Nevertheless, he says, the Department of Public Health (DPH), under the administration of the Executive Office of Human Services, has refused to lend its name to subway advertisements and billboards encouraging people to use condoms. "It seems to me that the governor is not comfortable" with advocating condom use, said Kessler. "This is not a 1990s discussion," he said. "It discourages me to no end, but it does not surprise me."

Joe Landolfi, a spokesperson for Secretary of Human Services Philip Johnston, said that the administration was not opposed to condom ads, and that a simple oversight was responsible for Johnston's failure to approve the ad before a printer deadline. He added, however, that Johnston did not think the ads were necessarily effective. Landolfi said that Johnston is planning a multi-faceted AIDS strategy, including pro-condom advertisements, but declined to offer any details.

According to Kessler, state government has never authorized use of its funds to promote condom use for AIDS prevention. In May, Kessler and representatives of the Multicultural AIDS Coalition, the Latino

Health Network, and the Boston AIDS Consortium issued a strongly-worded statement calling on the Dukakis administration to support condom advocacy. The groups demanded condom availability in state prisons, the installation of vending machines in restrooms around the state, and the promotion of condom use in all school-based AIDS education programs. In addition, the governor was called upon to support a public advertising campaign, spearheaded by DPH, encouraging people to use condoms.

In response to these demands, Johnston told the *Globe* that the administration would initiate a visible campaign to stop the spread of AIDS. That commitment was broken, AIDS advocates charge, when the administration withheld approval July 10 for DPH endorsement of the billboard and subway poster campaign.

Condom promotion is the backbone of most, if not all, AIDS prevention efforts not designed by conservative churches. Gay activists have advocated condom use to prevent the spread of AIDS since the early 1980s, and even the ultra-conservative Reagan administration — albeit under a renegade Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop — took a pro-condom position by 1987. That same year, Dukakis threatened to pull AIDS Action Committee (AAC) funding in response to the agency's production of an explicit safer sex brochure with state funds. Since that time, according to Kessler, AIDS Action has never used state funding for any literature that mentions condoms or sex.

The Dukakis administration's unwillingness to consider condom use seemed destined to change earlier this year when the Boston-based PWA [People with AIDS] Coalition approached DPH about funding subway and billboard ads promoting condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS, according to Kessler.

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ED BOYCE

Blimey, it's London Pride!

LONDON — Approximately 25,000 lesbians, gay men, bisexual people and their supporters descended on the streets of London for that city's annual Pride march June 30. The parade route wound through the city and ended with a rally and festival in Kennington Park.

There were few reported incidents of controversy within the loud and proud bunch of queers, although the ever-active ACT UP/London staged a small zap action against a table set up by the Marxist Revolutionary Party. ACT UP decried the Party's assertions that the concept of safe sex is a government conspiracy, that in reality there is no such thing as safe sex and that heterosexuals are not susceptible to AIDS.

□ Christopher Wittke

COMMUNITY VOICES

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All letter and "Speaking Out" contributions must be **TYPED** and **DOUBLE-SPACED**. Letters can be **NO LONGER THAN TWO PAGES**. Speaking Out" contributions can be **NO LONGER THAN FOUR PAGES** and require a short (one to two sentence) biographical note about the author for inclusion at the end of the article.

Because GCN wishes to encourage dialogue and a diverse representation of perspectives on the letters pages, printing of "Speaking Out" contributions received from authors who have had other "Speaking Outs" appear in GCN recently may be postponed temporarily.

For editing purposes, it is helpful to be able to contact you easily -- please enclose your name, address, and daytime phone number with your letter or article. Thanks.

Send to: Community Voices/Speaking Out, GCN, 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.

The opinions expressed in "Speaking Out" contributions are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN staff, Board or membership.

Lesbian Fantasy

Dear GCN:

This goes in the late category -- it's been a hectic life!

I was browsing through the Pride issue (GCN, June 10-16, 1990) when suddenly, I found myself reading a lesbian erotic fantasy! I did a double check. No. I wasn't reading Bad Attitude, Outrageous Women or On Our Backs. But something similar was printed in

GCN. What a pleasant surprise!! And unlike the three lesbian erotic magazines mentioned, the GCN story contained no hardcore sm. I assume the lesbian sex police were able to handle this, and that you were not trashed for printing such fiction. But did you receive positive responses?? Here, in the better late than never category, is mine. I enjoyed the story, and would love to see more. Just say YES!

Nancy Irwin
Somerville, Mass.

Sexism is sexism no matter what

Dear GCN:

It was interesting to read about the opening night protest at Maximum Security a couple of weeks ago. I am opposed to sexism and wish that all bars were open to all people, whatever their sex, skin color, sexual tastes, or age. However, I recognize that not all people share this desire, and feel that people should be able to associate with or avoid whomever they wish. And, while I oppose efforts to compel others to associate with those they wish to avoid, I think protests like that at Maximum Security are the right way to show one's opposition to the club's practices.

What struck me about this action was the hypocrisy of the protesters. There are many other sexist establishments and practices in "the community," but these people have not seen fit to picket at Crone's Harvest's women-only events, and Rock Against Sexism, one of the groups that endorsed the protest, has had at least one women-only event of their own at the Cambridge Women's Center. Women customers were in Maximum Security the night of the protest. Where were the men at RAS's CRASH Course? Sexism is sexism, no matter who's doing the hating, and "anti-sexists" like those at the protest would be more credible if they were more consistent.

Joe Peacott
Boston, Mass.

Removing sexually explicit material

Dear GCN:

RE: 1-900 Advertisements: I asked my therapist if he would like copies of Gay Community News for his waiting room after I am done with them. (He does have The Advocate there.) I was prompted to suggest this because of your excellent discussions on women's and bisexual issues. After looking at a copy of GCN, he declined to have it in his waiting room, even though he found the articles interesting. His refusal was because of the 1-900 and other sexually explicit advertising which he feels is (1) offensive to women clients, and (2) inappropriate for those clients who are dealing with issues of sexual addiction recovery. (He removes the sexually explicit advertising section from The Advocate before putting it out.)

Please consider printing sexually explicit ads in a center section which can be removed. This way GCN could be easily made available in settings where the sexual ads might not be welcome - whether that be a therapist's office, or shared with family.

I appreciate your removal of these ads from the back cover of GCN (perhaps in response to an earlier letter of mine) so that I can continue to read it on the bus without embarrassment.

I am still concerned that gay newspapers are relying heavily on advertisers who profit from our feelings of isolation and offer sex (?) as a substitute for a sense of community. I wonder what will happen to GCN if telephone sex ads disappear. I don't want GCN to disappear with them!

Mike Ramey
Seattle, Wash.

More investigative reporting needed on prison life

Dear GCN

Because the Gay Community News staff and contributing writers do not write articles on the day-to-day struggles of Gay people behind the Wall (prison), the non-prisoner reader may perhaps tend to think that Gay people in prison aren't catching hell. Allow me to state that although your "Community Voices" section prints many letters from Gay prisoners, the absence of investigative reporting leaves a void in an area that

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of ten, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

The GCN Collective in alphabetical order by primary title/function (* indicates member of paid staff collective):

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PAGE 4 ☐ JULY 15-21, 1990 ☐ GAY COMMUNITY NEWS

We will not be silent for silence equals death

by Benjamin Incerti

My name is Benjamin Incerti. I am HIV positive and I represent ACT UP/Boston. We want to know why the Pride Committee neglected to have a PWA or PW-ARC or an HIV-infected person as a speaker.... Speakers were voted for. When people hold elections, guess what, folks? PWAs don't win. HIV and AIDS people need to be represented by their own groups so they can speak for themselves. It's the duty of the Pride organizers to see to it that the gay and lesbian community hears what PWAs have to say. It is shameful that the Pride Committee failed to see this point. And I encourage next year's committee not to make this same mistake, but to include PWAs fully and completely in this process. The lesbian and gay community's commitment to PWAs and HIV-positive people is unwavering. It must lead our agenda at gay and lesbian pride celebrations.

I am proud to represent ACT-UP here today - the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power. We exist to fight a guerilla war against AIDS. We exist because we have to. We exist because we cannot and will not put our lives in the hands of George Bush, or Dan Quayle, or Jesse Helms, or Cardinal Law. We are visible - and vocal - because in the Reagan-Bush years, they wanted us to be invisible...to just go away...to just not act up. But we will not go away.

During Ronald Reagan's eight-year reign of terror, he did not publicly use the word "AIDS" once. Not at all. Never. And in the fight against AIDS, that is the *least* of his crimes. Now, what has George Bush done for us? George Bush planted a tree for Ryan White. We want leadership and money to fight this war, not symbolism. The entire AIDS research budget to date has been less than the cost of one Stealth Bomber.

We will never just go away. George Bush and his henchmen will never be able to wash

away our blood from their hands. I said before that I am living with HIV infection. I found that out four years ago. I went to Harvard Community Health with swollen lymph nodes. One doctor recommended a biopsy. "Maybe it's Hodgkins disease," she said. I was sent to one of Harvard's surgeons. His advice? "Go home. There's no need for a biopsy. You should know the story. You have AIDS."

But when any of us demand compassion and dignity, no one seems to know what we are talking about. It's really very simple. Although it may be different stops on the same train, people with HIV infection, AIDS, or ARC need to be treated as individuals...to have quality care which addresses our own personal health status. We must not be sent down a medical assembly line for a handful of pills and injections and astronomical insurance and hospital bills. That ensures poverty, not recovery. We cannot be put on a medical treadmill that leads nowhere for us, but that leads to Nobel Prizes for them. For two years, I've taken 500 milligrams of AZT every day. Now, I take AZT plus aerosolized pentamidine. I feel like I am running out of time. But I feel fortunate in a lot of ways, too. There are many other people whose story is much more grim. And many more who are no longer here to tell their story.

From a very personal point of view, that is why I speak here today. I can be involved. I can be active. I am able to fight. I was among more than a thousand AIDS activists from around the country who stormed the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md., on May 21. Twelve of us from Boston were arrested, along with about 80 others from places like New York, Texas, and Oklahoma. Some say we use radical tactics to be heard. Maybe they're right. We did have the *audacity* to demand full access to AIDS treatment

for everyone - all people who are HIV-positive - no matter their age, race, color, or gender. We had the *nerve* to demand more money for AIDS research...to demand equal rights and an end to discrimination...to demand access and treatment to new drugs for people with AIDS now.

People with AIDS don't have time to wait. And for these radical and subversive demands, we were beaten, clubbed, gassed and jailed. I am angry about that. I am angry at the violence against people who are HIV-positive. Not so much the kind of violence from fists and clubs and mace. But the kind of violence from delays, foot-dragging and miles of red tape the government and medical establishment uses to strangle us. Let's look at the facts...

- There is violence in the fact that there is one AIDS death every 11 minutes.

- The United States government has resources - scientific, technical, and financial - to develop treatments which can make AIDS a chronic manageable disease. We must harness those resources NOW! People with AIDS don't have time to wait for medical referees and FDA regulators. The lack of a single staff person kept aerosolized pentamidine from being tested for 13 months after an NIH committee earmarked it as "high priority." Sixteen thousand Americans died from that delay. President Bush and Congress must increase funding for AIDS research NOW! We cannot afford to wait.

- We must end medical apartheid now. We must open drug trials to all people with HIV infection - women, people of color, present and former drug users, and pediatric AIDS victims.

- We must end blind drug studies which use placebos. It is unconscionable to withhold possibly life-saving treatments from anyone.

- We must fight SB1578, a bill which would deny us our constitutional rights to freedom of information in Massachusetts. We must defeat the Burroughs-Wellcome bill!

- We must continue to fight for needle exchange programs and for condom distribution in our schools.

- We demand access to new experimental drugs NOW! Less conservatism, more action! President Bush and Congress must increase funding for AIDS research and education NOW!

Finally, we cannot be silent. We must act up for our lives. One week from today - June 16 - ACT UP/Boston, the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, the Reproductive Rights Network and many other groups will be in front of Holy Cross Cathedral in the South End. We will confront Cardinal Law. He is against opening health clinics in public schools for fear that young people will get information about sex or access to contraception. His opposition to AIDS education is a threat to the lives of thousands of sexually active teens and reinforces the myth that AIDS is confined to gay men and drug addicts. And after fighting unsuccessfully against the gay rights bill, he now works to repeal it.

We will go and be visible. We will be vocal. We will not be silent, for silence equals death.

deserves some consistent attention. And your annual poetry spread, though it's always informative, is insufficient to adequately inform the public at large about what it's like to be Gay in prison.

Moreover, about the State's complicity in the oppression of Gay prisoners. The masses at large should know that today, 1990, Gay people behind the Wall are not only being oppressed, but that they are literally enslaved. Buying and selling passive Gay prisoners is commonplace here at the Louisiana State Penitentiary. Our keepers are fully aware of this illicit and criminal indulgence. From time to time there are killings or stabbing involving former Gal-boys (someone who has been brutally and sexually raped, enslaved and exploited) and non-Gal-boys, and/or the want-to-be-straight prisoner. In most instances the want-to-be-straight has aggressed upon the former Gal-boy, giving him a rude ultimatum to either be his slave or be killed. When a battle ensues, if the predator is hurt, our keepers use this incident to line their pockets with loot or to deepen their dehumanization of us.

Putting one group of prisoners against another group of prisoners is one of the secrets (and chief schemes) of how they secure and control us. And if nothing is frankly done to put a thorough end to their practice in such affairs, they will continue their treacherous wrongs.

Rebuild,
Albert Chui Clark
79909, CCR, D-tier-4
LA State
Penitentiary
Angola, LA 70712

A letter would help

Dear GCN:

Help! My life is being threatened by some gay bashing inmates and I'm being forced to choose between complete isolation and going back into 'general population' where they are. This is driving me crazy. I would like to get into a 'protection' wing where the isolation is not so complete. I believe a little interest shown from the outside would help me tremendously. Please consider writing me and asking for details so that you can, is you decide to, write a letter of support to the warden (with copies to the governor). This is only a small effort from you, and it means a great deal to me!! Thank you so much. (PS: Please send one (only) stamp-

embossed envelope so I can reply quickly. They don't let us have plain stamped envelopes. Thanks again!

[Prisoner Project note: Tom has been a reader, poem writer and artist for our project for a while now. Please consider helping him out.]

Tom Blankenship
195-152
Box 45699
Lucasville, OH
45699

Anti-gay attitudes explodingly high in Iowa prisons

Dear GCN:

Hello, I am a faithful reader of GCN and I just wondered if I could ask the other readers to do some gay prisoners a favor. I would like to say that the treatment of gay prisoners in the Iowa Men's Reformatory is extremely homophobic and behind the times. Anti-gay attitudes are explodingly high here and all gay or suspected gay prisoners are discriminated in all areas of their prison life, where they work, live, spend rec time, who they associate with, etc. Prison life has enough emotional tension in itself for everyone, so why are prison authorities allowed to increase such tension because of one's sexuality? People of society, gay prisoners need your help, desperately! If you are interested in finding out more about how you can help, please consider writing a prisoner, in your state or not, and find out what can be done. A little outside interest can do great things.

Thank you,
John Middleton
Box B - 803659
Anamosa, IA 52205

Hello/Goodbye

It's not exactly that we forgot to mention the major staff changes that have happened around here in the past few months, it's just that our collective denial mechanism is so acute that we've simply let the job slide.

Long-time staff person Jennie McKnight ages ago, when she left the paper and headed back to her hometown-area on the West

Coast. In her almost three years here, Jennie - more than most staff people - truly came to understand the revolving-door policy regarding GCN positions. Jennie established herself first as News Editor extraordinaire and then shifted into the National Reporter/Circulation Co-coordinator position for about a year.

Perhaps Jennie's fabulous coverage of the San Francisco AIDS Conference in recent weeks led you to believe that she was still here or that you were there or that we were all together, or something. We were sorry to see Jennie leave and miss her workhorse tendencies around the office, but we're "rilly glod" she's keeping us abreast of the SF scene, and look forward to seeing her byline in our pages for ages and ages.

Chris Nealon became our new National Reporter/Circulation Co-coordinator after Jennie trained him and trained him and trained him. Perhaps it took us so long to get this welcome into the paper because his desk is as neat and tidy as the day he got here, and we find it hard to believe that anyone actually occupies it. Oh, sure, he gets articles done, and he oversees every other Friday night stuffing party, but we ask you: Where are the piles of unopened mail and periodicals tossed about with abandon? We happily welcome Chris to the GCN collective and promise to teach him how to be a slob, ASAP.

And now, for what we hope will be our last Hello/Goodbye for a long, long time (but we won't count on it) ... we'd like to say "So long" to Natalie Diffloth, who was our fearless Coordinating Editor for almost-exactly-to-the-day-one-year. Natalie accomplished oodles while she was here, not the least of which was her spearheading the campaign that is pulling us into the age of desktop publishing. Thank you for everything, Natalie, especially for making us so tres moderne. Your departure also brings a tear to the eye, since we're sure your assistant "Mary" has gone with you.

A great big, hairy welcome goes out to Frank Strona who is our brand spanking new Coordinating Editor. Frank joins the collective with boundless energy and much business management experience (which will be extremely handy in his new position) and has even been heard to say "I thrive in crisis situations." Frank Strona, this is your life.

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- Urvashi Vald, Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

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Marines

Continued from page 1

- Barracks Commander Col. Peter Pace must reconsider evidence and acknowledge the attack's anti-gay nature;
- Both Marine and police officials must condemn "multi-faceted bias-related crimes" against homosexuals, "ranging from epithets to homicide."

The June 17 attack continues a pattern of intimidation and violence — a "rampage," said Hyde — against homosexuals documented in the neighborhood and beyond. In 1980, three Marines were arrested for tossing an ignited tear gas canister into Remingtons' location. This year, Marines smashed a window, kicked in an inner door, and repeatedly harassed customers there.

During the first months of operation near the Marine barracks last year, Hill Haven's owner reported that Marines repeatedly harassed women customers. In February, several Marines were thought responsible for setting off a smoke bomb in the lesbian bar's stairwell.

Marines are also thought to be perpetrators of periodic harassment and violence directed at gay men cruising the two Jima Memorial.

Behind Marine enlistees' hatred for homosexuals is broad oppression from the U.S. Defense Department, said Hyde, founder of the Gay and Lesbian Military Freedom Project at NGLTF. "Why should Marines understand we have as much right to walk these streets here as they do?" she asked. Marine Corps leadership "routinely persecutes lesbians and gay men in their very own ranks, doing their jobs, serving honorably and well. They get thrown out, beat up. Why would soldiers think civilian gay people would be any different?"

Also marching while protesters shouted, "Black, white, straight, gay — Hate crimes must be stopped today," was Eleanor Holmes Norton, candidate for the D.C. Delegate seat in Congress and head of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission in the Carter administration. "The outbreak of violence has been transferred from Black people to gay men and lesbians," she said. "We've got to make the point that it's no more tolerable. We can't let homophobic attacks replace racist attacks." □

Condom ad

Continued from page 3

ding to the PWA Coalition's Steven Busby. DPH agreed to pay for the PWA Coalition-sponsored ads, and the concept was expanded to include a second set of advertisements. These were developed by a broad network of AIDS service agencies, including some in Spanish and potentially in Portuguese, which were planned to run side-by-side with the PWA Coalition ads, and explicitly state that they were sponsored by the Department of Public Health.

According to Fenway Community Health Center's Steve Huber, these ads were to be funded through a DPH grant administered by Fenway. Huber said that while both sets of advertisements will go forward, and will be paid for out of DPH funds, DPH's wavering on whether or not to include their name on the posters and billboards has resulted in long time delays. "First we were planning to have them out by June 1, then we were thinking July 1," said Huber. "Now, it looks like it won't be until the fall," he said.

The posters in question have the words "Put a condom between you and AIDS" in red, white and blue letters in the English version. The Spanish ad carries the message translated as "A condom is the best defense against AIDS," according to Kessler. The PWA Coalition posters and billboards read "The PWA Coalition has enough members — use a condom." The group's other poster has a more generic condom message, originally conceived as a simple graphic without words. However, according to Busby, that design was too controversial. "It might suggest that condoms could be used for birth control, or the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases," Busby said, "and Dukakis certainly couldn't be associated with that."

According to Busby and all the AIDS service providers contacted for this article, the unwillingness to be publicly associated with condom advocacy does not come from the DPH's AIDS Office, but from Johnston and Dukakis. "The problem with the last [state government] reorganization under Dukakis is that it placed the Department of Public

Continued on page 11

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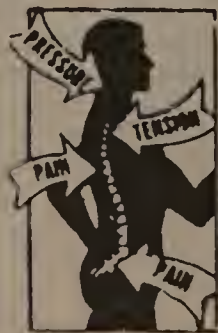
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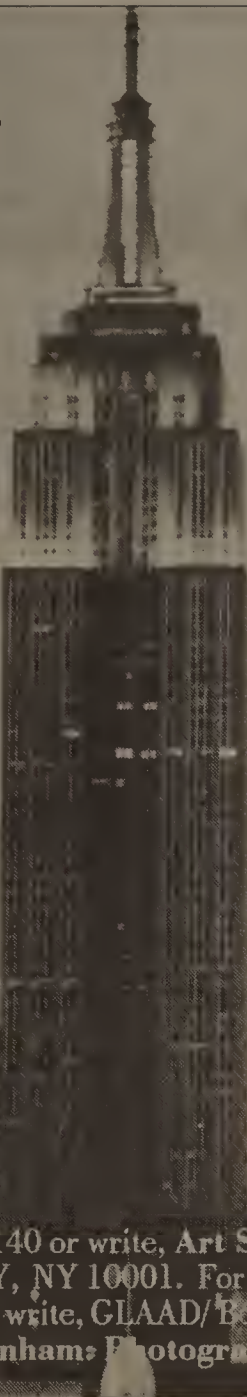
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Gay Latino Lawyer Mystery Writer

Michael Nava

Not a
straight
white man
writing
about
straight
white men

by Wayne Curtis

I recently talked to Michael Nava, the 35-year-old lawyer and author about his work — particularly his new novel *How Town*, and his views on writing and publishing for a gay audience. Given the success he has enjoyed over the last five years, Nava is in a position many gay writers would envy. While creating unabashedly gay protagonists, he has received positive recognition from mainstream reviewers, and a two-book deal from Harper & Row publishers (recently renamed Harper-Collins). The success of *How Town* firmly establishes Nava as one of the lesbian and gay community's leading literary figures. (See accompanying review.)

Nava was born in Sacramento, California, to second-generation Mexican-Americans. "I grew up in a barrio called Gardenland," he says. "I am the second oldest of six children, and I am the only one who made it out of there."

Reserved, guarded, and usually quite serious, Nava displays the qualities that helped him get through adolescence. "I knew I was gay when I was 12, which was not a good thing to be in my family situation. I knew I had to leave Sacramento, to throw myself at the world and hope it didn't throw me back."

High school class president and valedictorian, Nava went off to Colorado College and Stanford Law School before becoming a Los Angeles city prosecutor in 1981. His three years in that position gave him first-hand exposure to the types of characters that would populate his novels, the first of which, *The Little Death*, was published by Alyson Publications in 1986. He also edited *Finale* (Alyson, 1989), a collection of mysteries, and is currently soliciting manuscripts for a gay and lesbian Latino/a anthology due to be published by Alyson.

GCN: In an article in the 'Lambda Book Report' a year or so ago, you wrote that it was time for gay writers to get on with the business of living, that we had focussed for too long on the coming-out process. How have you strived to accomplish that in your own writing?

Michael Nava: The focus of my own identity has shifted away from being just a homosexual...part of it is being a lawyer, part is being Latino. I live in more than one dimension. When I read books, I look for characters who also live in more than one dimension. I'm tired of characters who are only gay, for whom that is the limit of their identity.

In my own writing, I try to depict the reality in which I live, which in California is multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and certainly multi-sexual orientation. I live in a very rich world here, and I try to depict it with some veracity. That is one of my goals as a writer, to accurately paint a picture of my world.

How do you feel that you and Henry Rios have grown and changed in the years between 'The Little Death' and 'How Town'?

Well, there have been momentous upheavals in my life. I split with my lover of nine years, I got sober, I went into therapy to deal with some issues of my sexuality which I had yet to confront.... During the last two years, during the writing of *How Town*, I was in a state of great emotional upheaval. I'm a different person than when I wrote *The Little Death*. Then I was an upper-class suburban housewife, basically... [laughs]...and I don't quite know what I am now, but I'm not that anymore.

I have in the past been as distant from my feelings internally as I have been externally. I hate to sound like a Californian, but I do think that now I am a lot more...centered these days.

I think Henry has reflected some of that. His ruminations are not as desperate and bleak. He has a richer interior life now, and is more accepting of himself than he was. I also think he has allowed a little passion to come into his life in the form of his lover, and has been willing to interact with another human being on an intimate level, as opposed to interacting with others only as their protector in the court of justice.

Since it seems Henry has been dealing with many of the same issues that you have, how much has writing been of a therapeutic value for you through these times?

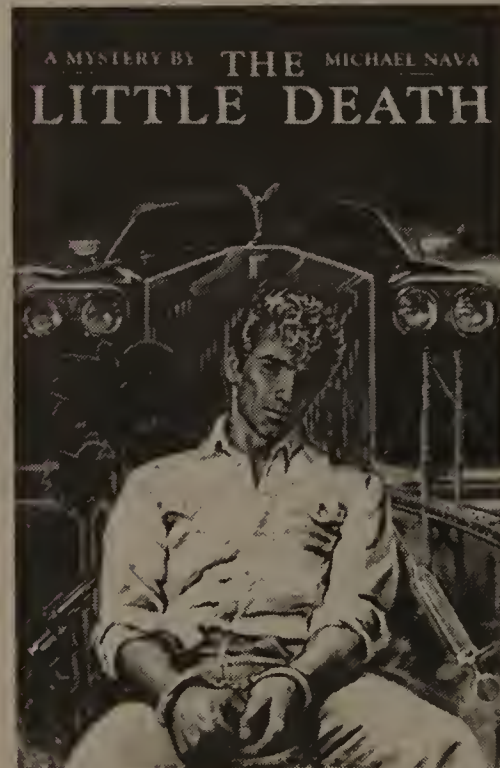
That's an interesting question. It hasn't really been therapy for me. If I have a great upheaval in my life, I'll probably end up writing about it. I mean, Henry is also a recovering alcoholic, but I didn't put that in there because I was trying to work out my own feelings about it. I'm fairly clear about how I feel about it — it saved my life. It was also the biggest thing going on in my life at the time I wrote about it.



ROBERT DOYLE

A few years ago you were quoted as saying, in no uncertain terms, that you and Henry Rios are not the same person. Yet, particularly in 'How Town,' there seems to be so much blurring between your life and early background, and the background that Rios confronts as he works through the tangle. Is this book a belated coming-out, or "coming-to-grips" novel for you?

That's another good question...[pause]. I don't think I'd describe *How Town* as a coming-out book. I do think you're accurate in calling it a "coming-to-grips" book because when Henry goes back to his hometown he realizes that there is a big gap in his knowledge of himself. I have to say that I've not had that experience, and to some extent I was projecting a fantasy onto Henry. In that sense we're not the same person. I gave him a similar background and then had him go work it out, but I haven't worked it out yet.



One characteristic of your writing is that there is such an emotional depth to it that it's hard to characterize it as genre fiction. Can Michael Nava write just fluff?

No. I can't [chuckles]. My agent asked me at one point if I could write one of those mechanical whodunits, and I can't. I am a very serious human being [laughs], which doesn't mean that I can't be funny sometimes, but I take life at a very serious level, especially in my writing. It's impossible for me not to be concerned with nuance and detail and depth.

In an interview you did right after 'Goldenboy' was published, you said that you were beginning to turn your attention to various issues that you wanted to address in your writing. At that point you said that your next novel would deal with pedophilia. Is there a new issue that you feel is drawing you toward it?

In many ways it's a continuation of *How Town*. I want to write about addiction, drug and alcohol addiction. And I want to write about the effects of that on the family. A lot of mystery writers I know are writing about "DRUGS," and I also want to write about drugs, but I want to come at it from a completely different angle. I want to talk about the addict, rather than about the "cops and robbers" aspect, which holds very little interest for me. And I want to write about the psychology of addiction and spin that out into a mystery. That's what the next Rios book will be, which I'm tentatively calling *The Hidden Law*.

Over the course of the last few books, Henry has developed an interesting family of characters, from his new partner in 'How Town' to his private investigator to his lover, and others. Does the growth of this supporting cast indicate a long-term, many-book commitment to Henry Rios, a la Joseph Hansen and Dave Brandstetter?

Umm, I don't know. I never actually set out to create a family for Henry, these characters just sort of stuck around. And I didn't know Henry was going to take Stein for his partner until I got to that chapter. After I finished the book I sort of panicked because I realized I had him moving to Los Angeles, so I've got to do something about him. I think I've sort of maxed Henry out on supporting cast. Fortunately I don't have to use them all in every book, or I'd really have trouble keeping my story straight.

I like the character of Henry Rios. I see at least another couple of books with him in them because I'm not finished with him yet. But I don't know if I can do what Joe Hansen does. He's now working on his twelfth Brandstetter book. It stops being challenging as a writer at some point and I need that challenge.

Do you mean that you can get to know a character too well? You said you were surprised that Henry took Stein as a partner.... Are you enthralled by the idea that your own characters can surprise you?

Yeah, and particularly Henry, since everyone assumes that I'm Henry. I understand that if you know me only from my work.... Now, if you've spent much time with me you know we're not the same character. I like it that Henry is becoming less of an emotional control freak, so he has quirks now. He reacts in ways that surprise me.

Does it bother you that some readers dismiss genre fiction like science fiction or mystery — anything but the serious, literary gay novel — as trivial, or somehow less important, when what you're trying to write is really much more than that?

Yeah, it really annoys me that straight people, by and large, if they come to a book that has a gay character as the protagonist, will say "This is a gay book that has nothing to do with me." It just shows a lack of im-

agination on the part of heterosexual readers who refuse to believe that they could learn anything from the experience of someone who is different from them.

When a gay reader or reviewer says, “Oh, this is a gay ‘mystery’ and so it has nothing to do with me because it’s not a literary novel,” it’s just as annoying as the straight response.

Do you ever consider giving up the mystery?

I do sometimes despair continuing in the field of mystery, because I feel I’m in two ghettos at this point. Frankly, I feel I write as well as any gay writer writing today, and I resent being dismissed by straight readers as a gay writer and as a mystery writer by gay people.

But, I’ll continue to write about crime because the great themes of justice and morality get played out in a much more direct way than in any other type of fiction.

I was particularly reminded of you when reading an article recently on Scott Turow and his new novel, because he is heralded as a similar kind of writer using a very similar kind of writing to get across very similar messages, and yet he is on the cover of ‘Time,’ getting half-million dollar advances and millions in the sale of paperback rights, and your two-book deal totaled just \$30,000. Is this just the prejudice against gay writing coming out?



That’s a complicated question. In the abstract, it does reflect the homophobia in the publishing industry that a writer like Scott Turow, who is in my opinion a not particularly good writer and from a political standpoint a repellant writer, gets so much attention, whereas other similar writers — not just me, but writers like Katherine Forrest and, on the straight side Sarah Peretsky — don’t get that kind of attention because we’re not straight white men writing about straight white men.

But I don’t want to sound bitter about it because I don’t begrudge Turow his success. I have every expectation that I’ll have my success. I don’t want his success, I want my own, in whatever form that takes.

I remember reading that you were at one time working on a novel about lawyers, not a mystery. Is that something you’re still working on?

Well, its something that I finished about halfway through and put away, and I don’t know if I’ll ever return to it. I think my motivation for writing it was wrong. I was trying to write a mainstream novel, although one of the major characters was gay. It didn’t feel close to me in the way that the Rios novels do. So, I just stopped writing it. I have to admit that there have been periods in my writing career, which has only been six years, when people have come to me and said, “You know, if you could write a mainstream novel you could be a Scott Turow,” and I was seduced by that. But I’m not seduced by that anymore. First of all, I no longer believe it; and second, I’m not really interested in writing a novel just to make money.

Your career started by sending an unsolicited manuscript over the transom of a small gay publisher....

Yes, it did....

And you subsequently moved to a New York publishing house. Is there any one overriding feeling that accompanied you as you went through that period of change?

Well, [pause] I think every writer wants to

have as wide an audience as possible, because we don’t write these things for our own amusement, no matter what we say. I knew that wouldn’t be possibe with Alyson because of the way their distribution and marketing is set up. So I knew that if it was going to be possible for me, at some point I would go to a larger publisher, and I communicated that to Sasha Alyson fairly early on and we talked about it intermittently. Gay publishers’ distribution is limited, frankly, and if any of us is going to get beyond the gay market — which may be an illusion in and of itself — we need to have the means to be able to do that. And also the money is better, although not that much better.

I made the move on that basis, and my experience with Harper & Row...excuse me, I mean HarperCollins...has been pretty unpleasant, actually. With the possible exception of St. Martin’s and Michael Deneny, I don’t think the New York houses have any real commitment to our community in terms of supporting its literature. They don’t have any real knowledge of our community, and they’re absolutely committed to the bottom line. The moment that we stop making money for them they’ll drop us. I’ve become more convinced than ever that we need the small gay and lesbian publishing houses because those are the people who have a commitment to gay and lesbian literature.

You’ve talked about being “seduced” by the lure of writing for the mainstream market... At many of the recent conferences and seminars on gay and lesbian writing, just moving from the small press to a New York press has been defined by some as being “seduced.” How would you answer the charge that by leaving Alyson in the first place you have already succumbed?

Well, I don’t know.... I haven’t been seduced. I made the conscious decision to reach as many readers as I could. I’m not responsible for the structure of the publishing industry. I want my books read, so I went to a house that could distribute them to places where a small press can’t.

On the other side of the ledger, I continue to work with Alyson. I did *Finale* for them, and I’m doing an anthology for them of Latino and Latina gay and lesbian writing, so I haven’t deserted the small press, I’ve just broadened my scope. That’s how I live with my choices.

Another product of the recent activism (like the OutWrite conference and the Publishing Triangle at the American Booksellers Association Convention in 1989) in writing circles is that there is a real divergence between the adversarial way straight writers view the publishing industry and the sympathetic way gay writers are being encouraged to view the gay publishing industry. What do you feel about this — are gay writers and publishers in a similar adversarial relationship, or are we all on the same team?

There is an adversarial relationship between all writers and publishers, and writers are exploited uniformly by publishers, whether they’re small press or large press. The writer who does not look after himself or herself is really inviting bitter disillusionment.

Having said that, I think there are degrees...it’s true that gay and lesbian publishers have a commitment to the community. Perhaps they don’t have a commitment to the individual writer, but they do publish works that affirm the gay and lesbian community. They’re willing to publish things the mainstream publishers won’t publish and they’re willing to keep their books in print forever. To the degree that they can, they take a more personal interest in the promotion of these books than the mainstream publishers do. But on another level, I think its true that gay and lesbian writers have to look out for themselves.

You know, if some publisher came up to me and said, “I want you to write this book for me, but I can only give you a thousand bucks but it’s for a good cause...” [laughs] I would not entertain that very seriously.

I have to say that gay and lesbian writers have to realize that in working with a small press you’re not able to walk in and demand a \$20,000 advance. The resources are much more limited. You have to scale your expectations to fit economic realities; but within those realities, you have to try to get the best deal that you can.

You have expressed some disappointment in the way ‘How Town’ has been treated. I’m sure other writers who aspire to the kind of acceptance you’ve achieved would be interested in your experiences.

The lesson I’ve learned — and although it was a bitter lesson, I guess I’m glad I’ve learned it — is that my publisher does not



have any idea how to market a book by a gay writer or with a gay protagonist. It’s startling, considering what they’ve paid me and that they’ve signed me to a two-book deal, that they haven’t done the routine things like calling gay journalists and asking them if they wanted to talk to me. I’ve ended up having to do all that myself. These are not things I particularly enjoy, and I’m a bit pissed off that I have to do them all myself.

That’s a valuable lesson for gay and lesbian writers to know. The fact that these publishers woo us and sign us to write books for them doesn’t imply that they know the first thing about how to sell our books. If you think that by going from an Alyson to a HarperCollins that you’re going to be promoted in a larger or more efficient way, you’re probably wrong.

Knowing what you know, and given the pros and cons of being at the small press, and the pros and cons of being wooed by a New York house, do you regret the decision to accept the advance?

No, not at all. The one thing that being published by a big house has given me is a degree of credibility that I didn’t have before. Now, this has nothing to do with the reality of being published by an Alyson as opposed to HarperCollins — I would have been much happier staying with Alyson — but it has opened doors for me. In this status-crazy society that we live in, it gets people’s attention to say that I’ve been published by Harper & Row. Saying I’ve been published by Alyson doesn’t.

Since *How Town* came out, I’ve been the subject of a long profile in the *Los Angeles Times* and a review in the *Wall Street Journal*, and these are things which I don’t believe would have happened had I remained with a small press — even though I’m the same writer.

And I’m grateful for that, because the straight world needs to know that there are Henry Rioses around. I’ve had some very touching letters from gay people about that *L.A. Times* interview particularly, who view Henry Rios as a role model.

Also, it’s helped me get better in touch with my own ethnicity, and helped me to write about it. I’ve gotten a lot of response from the Latino community, particularly from gay Latinos. There is such a hunger in that community for writers who talk about the experience of being a gay Latino, and there are so few people out there who have access to the media to be able to do it.

In that sense, this new anthology of Latino/Latina gay and lesbian writing must be an exciting project. Do you see it as perhaps a more important project than some of the others you’ve worked on in the past?

I certainly think it’s as important as the Rios book I’m writing. It’s a first, as far as I know. I really hope that there’s enough material to put into it because it has the potential to be as important for the Latino community as *In the Life* was for the Afro-American gay community.

I would also hope that, unlike *In the Life*, it spawns some more writing. One of the complaints I’ve hear fom Black writers is that there was *In the Life* and that was it. There hasn’t been much since then.

So yes, it does have significance that perhaps my other work doesn’t have. I hope so anyway. □

Welcome to How Town

The return of Michael Nava's detective hero, Henry Rios

How Town
Michael Nava
Harper & Row, New York, 1990
\$16.95 cloth, 244pp

Reviewed by Wayne Curtis

Award-winning writer Michael Nava returns to the bookshelves this summer with his third Henry Rios mystery, *How Town*. Since 1986, when Nava’s first novel, *The Little Death*, was received with choruses of praise from gay and mainstream reviewers, Nava has produced an impressive body of well-written fiction. His second novel, *Goldenboy* (1988), won two Lambda Literary Awards, including the award for Best Gay Mystery. *Finale* (1989), an anthology of mystery short stories which Nava edited (and to which he contributed an excellent piece titled “Street People”), received two nominations for 1989 Lambda awards.

As his best work yet, *How Town* will most certainly be on the list next year. Clearly, Nava is one of our community’s leading literary figures, and one of our most prolific authors. (See accompanying interview.)

How Town finds lawyer/sleuth Henry Rios returning to his hometown to take on a case that, once again, no one else will touch. Known child molester Paul Windsor has been accused of murdering a shadowy kiddy-porn peddler who had been arranging for Windsor to buy a little girl for his pleasure. The evidence against Windsor is purely circumstantial, but his prior record — and the wealth his family has accumulated over the years from high-profile real estate developments — make it highly unlikely that he will receive a fair hearing.

Of course, as the case develops it becomes much more complicated and suspenseful, but while Rios’s investigation progresses he must also contend with the ghosts that haunt his own childhood. The Windsor family holds a special place in Rios’s past — during his high school years he had a strong, unrequited love for Paul Windsor’s older brother, Mark. The Windsor’s mother also gave Rios his first brutal dose of bigotry, forbidding the Latino boy from the poor part of town access to their swimming pool.

Adding yet another layer to the story, Nava deals unflinchingly with the hot topic of pedophilia, and society’s traditional connection between child molesters and homosexuals. His writing is at its most powerful when Rios confronts his own distaste for Paul Windsor’s sexuality:

“He was alive when I left him,” Paul said. “Maybe he went out and picked someone up. That’s another disadvantage of being attracted to boys. Sometimes they put up a fight.”

“The coroner says McKay’s head was bashed in... Someone was very disappointed with him. How disappointed were you not to find the girl there?”

That wiped the smile off his face. “You can’t believe that I killed him.”

“If I disliked you enough I could,” I said. “If I was a juror with a child, a daughter, I might convince myself no matter how weak the evidence is.”

“You’re like everyone else,” he said bitterly.

“Right now we’re not talking about me. We’re talking about the judge who’ll try this case and the jurors who’ll decide it. They’re not going to regard pedophilia as normal, much less something to be proud of, and they’ll be fighting against their sense of decency to put you back on the streets. So let’s not make it any harder than it is.”

“What kind of faggot are you?” he shot back.

I smiled. “One with no illusions, Paul. I tell my gay clients the same thing I’ve just told you, and my black and Latino clients, too, for that matter. You don’t need to invent a conspiracy against you by Mark. Society is a conspiracy and everyone who’s different is its target.”

“So you admit that you and I are the same,” he said.

“I only admit that people in the mainstream don’t eut very fine distinctions about those of us who aren’t. I do.”

In subsequent moments of reflection, however, Nava and Rios grapple with the issue in a personal, more universal way that touches anyone who remembers his or her first sexual encounter:

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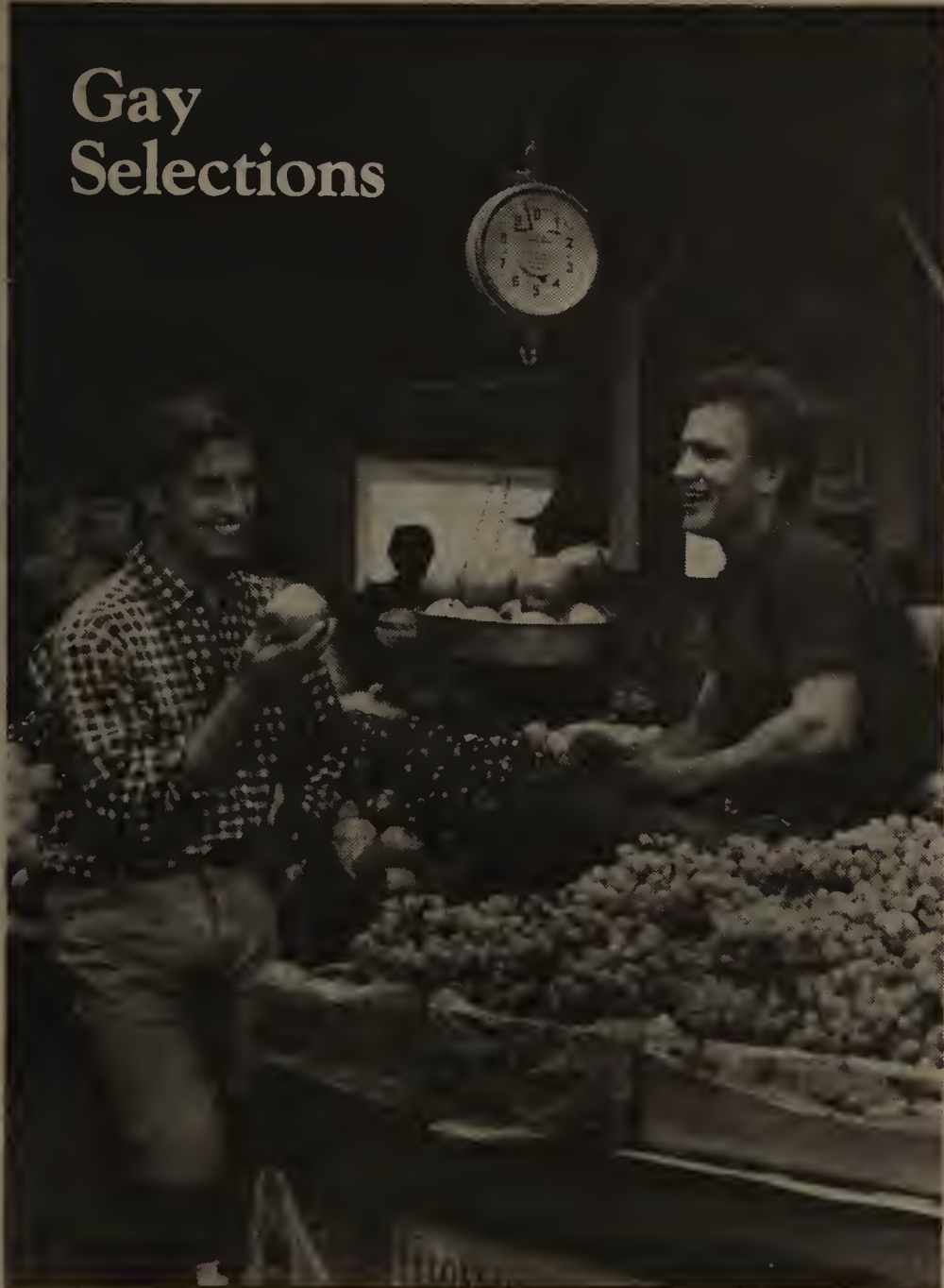
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Leatherforce

Continued from page 1

do it, according to Goodman) Sakowicz felt it was inappropriate. “The Church should not meddle in human sexuality,” he said. “The day [Kane] was elected President [of APW] was the day I started looking for other work. I fear for the people of Worcester.”

Jerry Cheney, the director of Health Awareness, another Worcester-based AIDS education project, said that he had not perceived any philosophical shift at APW. Cheney said that he relies on APW to recruit and screen volunteers for “Rubber Team,” a street outreach project that distributes condoms and bleach to gay men and IV drug users. Cheney said that he had experienced no change in his project’s relationship with APW.

Cheney added, however, that the Worcester-based Sexual Minorities AIDS Task Force, a gay political group of which he is a member, had sent a letter supporting the candidacy of a lesbian for the position of director of APW. Cheney said that fears that homophobia might be a factor in the hiring decision had prompted task force members to make this gesture of support.

Leather Force 2000

Leather Force 2000 is now seeking a new home base, according to Chiras. Despite Goodman’s claim that the difficulties between APW and Leather Force 2000 are resolvable, Chiras told *GCN* that he was not interested in returning to the agency. He said that he is looking for an office for the program, and is seeking funding for it as a separate nonprofit agency.

In spite of the loss of APW’s institutional backing, Chiras has continued his outreach and education work in the leather/SM community. Running the program with the help of a \$1200 grant from the Boston-based Leather and Lace group, Chiras has continued to organize events and distribute condoms and information in leather bars. But, he says, “I didn’t ask for enough money.” Maintaining the work of the project on the Leather and Lace grant “is like running on fumes from a car,” he said.

Chiras told *GCN* that he does not feel he can just stop doing leather/SM outreach. “The best way to prevent AIDS infection is to do one-on-one education. But the leather community is a tough nut to crack. You have to be an insider before people will listen to what you have to say,” he said, adding, “there are lives to be saved.” □

Condom ad

Continued from page 6

Health under the Executive Office of Human Services,” Busby told *GCN*, “which means that all decisions have become political.”

Even so, for all its liberal reputation, Massachusetts state government is more conservative on the condom issue than many others. “City governments, county governments all around the country are really way ahead of us,” Kessler told *GCN*. “Texas and Maryland have pamphlets showing how to put condoms on — which is much more than this ad campaign does — and this isn’t Texas,” he said, referring to that state’s reputation for conservatism.

The advertisement campaign will eventually run for three months on billboards and buses across Massachusetts. It has been endorsed and planned by a diverse range of organizations, including the Boston AIDS Consortium, AAC, Fenway, the Latino Health Network, and the Cape Cod AIDS Council. Kessler said that while these organizations still endorse the ad campaign, he thought that having the weight and authority of the DPH explicitly behind the advertisement could have made it more effective. “It’s important that the DPH be out there with the different agencies,” said Kessler. “The number of people who are getting infected is just incredible,” he said, adding, “and it is so unnecessary.” □

Teachers

Continued from page 3

when you saw that person. How old were you?” he challenged. “When you felt that attraction, was it something consciously decided, or did it just come to you? Did you decide to be attracted to that person, or was it a natural feeling?”

No one scratched their heads, and people smiled when Stephen disclosed his lesson plan. “You now know what it feels like to be a lesbian or gay man and feel an attraction of the same gender. It’s not something anyone makes a conscious choice to do. It happens naturally. That’s why orientation is a better term than preference. Nobody

chooses to be gay or lesbian.”

Stephen started Gays and Lesbians United in Education and pushed school officials to offer school guidance counselors sensitization about homosexuality in the Midwest’s Queen City.

“We ask you to break the silence about gay and lesbian youth, who have been neglected for too long,” Stephen said. “We have to stop children from calling each other names for the same reason we don’t let them use racial and ethnic slurs. Don’t let them do it in your classes,” he assigned delegates. “Challenge and correct children whenever you hear an anti-gay slur. It’s very important that this is communicated in all schools. There’s an epidemic of mis-information. Teachers have a professional responsibility to let others know what the truth is.” □

‘How Town’

Continued from center

I thought about boundaries and sex. I heard Paul saying, “They taste different, they smell different....” And then another fragment of conversation drifted through my mind, the first man I’d ever had sex with telling me, “It takes a man to know what a man likes.” Both statements of sexual chauvinism, but were they really comparable? I found myself staring at the dark cop. For all his bodybuilder’s bulk, he had a child’s round, large-eyed, pretty face. I looked away, quickly. “They taste different, they smell different....” What I’d meant when I told Paul my values were acquired through trial and error was that they were learned, not given, and that they came out of my own experience. I was not a pedophile, nor had I ever consciously entertained those fantasies, but I was a sexual being and for a moment in the jail I’d felt Paul’s excitement and it terrified me.

Here lies the brilliance of Michael Nava’s writing. Yes, his plots are well crafted and suspenseful; yes, his characters and dialogue are believable — but Nava is not satisfied with writing yet another whodunit. His works explore issues and deep inner motivations with an intensity that a Scott Turow or David Leavitt must admire. Whether the issue is alcohol abuse (*The Little Death*), homophobia and related violence (*Golden-boy*), or pedophilia, Nava’s books are not “just” gay mysteries (as some highbrow readers might dismiss them), they are thoughtful, complex dramas that involve the reader in a subconscious evaluation of his or her beliefs.

Through this treatment of difficult issues, Nava allows the reader to empathize with the damaged humanity of his characters, whether the uninvolved relative, the unjustly accused, or the revealed murderer. He points out to us that even in the most brutal crimes there can be a gray area between innocence and guilt, an area in which the definition of justice must rely on personal interpretation. As in life, Nava’s plots cannot be simplified to black-and-white morality plays concerning absolute right and absolute wrong.

For a gay and lesbian audience, *How Town* adds the tension of coming home, of reliving the pain of childhood rejection and differentness, and the affirmation and ultimate victory of self-acceptance.

Don’t take *How Town* to the beach. This is not a book from which you can look up frequently to admire the scenery, play volleyball, or reapply sunscreen. Save this one for a rainy summer afternoon, because you won’t want to put it down until you’re done. □

BWMT

Continued from back page

organizations of color. “So many [white gay men and lesbians] are so complacent.” And Teemer added that “there’s still too much separation and racism — as well as sexism — in the gay community.”

Even as the convention proceeded, in fact, gay and lesbian activists of color in San Francisco accused a long-time gay bar, the Midnight Sun, of “racist practices” such as asking Black men for identification at the door while letting white men enter unchecked. Convention organizers said that the activists, along with the city’s Human Rights Commission, were “in negotiation.”

Nonetheless, most delegates said they left the conference feeling uplifted, according to organizers. “Despite everything, we have in fact persisted for over 10 years, and have formed an organization that is pretty well structured,” said Bush. Referring to the overwhelmingly positive response BWMT got when convention delegates marched in the San Francisco Pride parade, he remarked, “It kind of keeps hope alive, as Jesse Jackson would say.”

□ filed from Boston

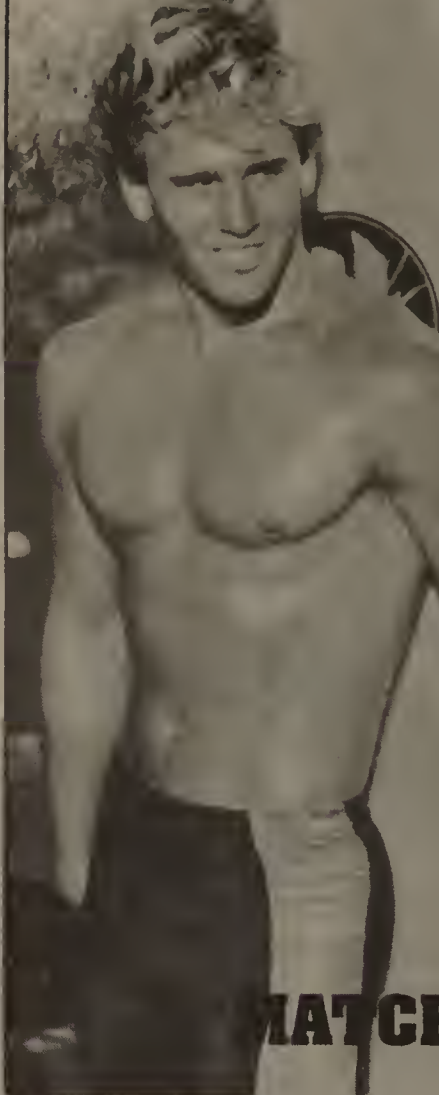
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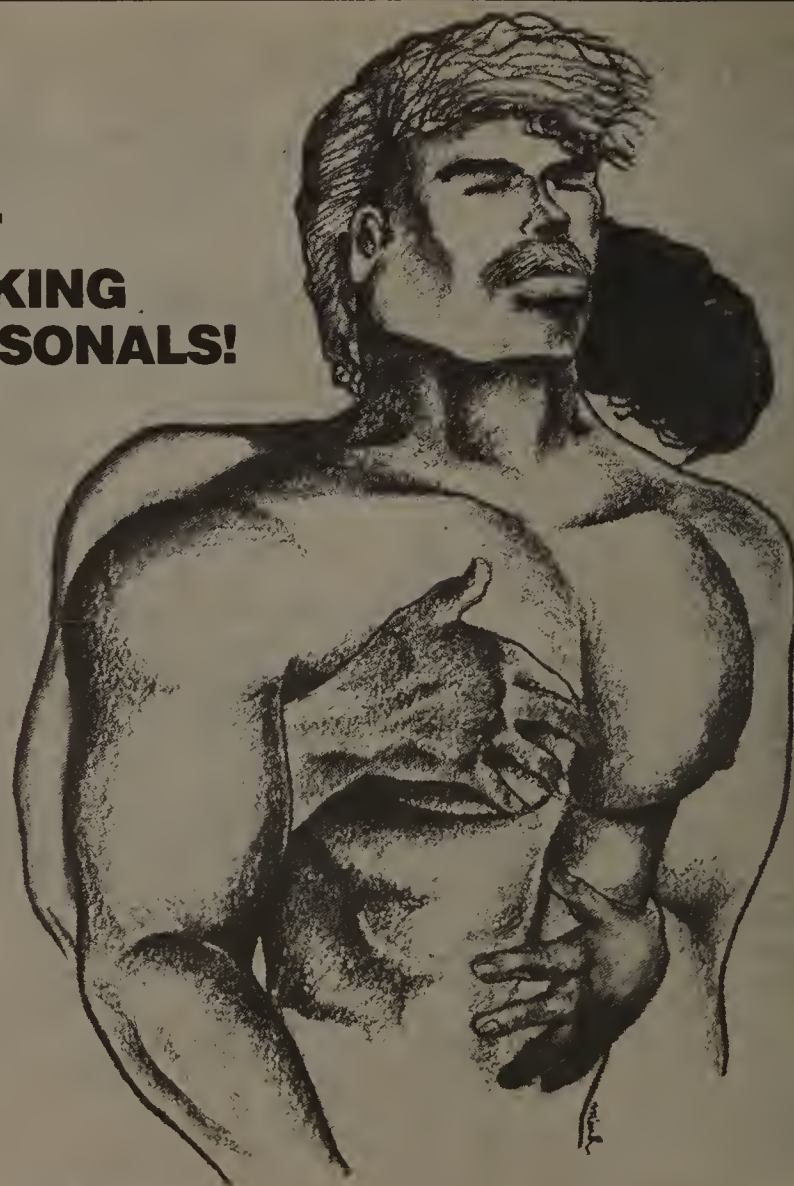


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JAMAICA PLAIN

3F (2L) seek 4th for friendly, semi-veg, semi-coop progressive house near T, Pond and Arboretum. No pets, no smking. \$270 per month plus 1/4 util. Avail now. 522-7466. (2)

JAMAICA PLAIN

Female roommate wanted for spacious, newly re-painted 2br apt. Hdw floors. Avail Aug 1. Rent is 237.50-plus (sec. dep. req.). 524-9047. Lv. mess. (4)

2LFs 30s and cat seek LF for nice apt Union Square Som. Quiet, semi-veg, no smoking, min. alcohol, no more pets. \$333 plus \$30 g & e. Aug. 1. 776-7909. (2)

2L's & sweet dog seek 1 or 2 women to share large beautiful house and garden in West Roxbury. Hardwood floors, w/d, really special! Flexible, relaxed atmosphere. No Smokers please. 367-plus for 3, \$275-plus for 4. Available August 1, Call Pat or Rebecca 323-6223. (2)

Roomate to share 4-bedroom, 2 bath home in Natick with 2 others. Washer, Dryer — Convenient to Pike. Avail July 15th. \$350-plus. 508-651-8240. (2)

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2 GM's are looking for a third person to rent a furnished room in our spacious home. Located on T-line in Dorchester, in a safe area. \$200.00 plus partial utilities, short term OK! Call 288-4468 leave message. Available immediately. (2)

LF 33 seeks LF to share 2 bedroom Cambridge apartment. Excellent location, sunny, hardwood floors, w/d, easy parking. \$475-plus. August 1st. Call 492-0837. (2)

LF seeks 2 LF roommates for nice apartment in JP. Calm an predictable environment. Available 8/1 and 9/1. \$325/heat included. 522-0405. (2)

SOMERVILLE — TEELE SQUARE

LF seeks same for quiet, sunny 5 room apt. with porches. Close to Davis Sq. T. Please no smoke, drugs or pets. \$275 plus utilities and security dep. Call 628-3216 pls leave message. (2)

2LFs seek 2 L/Bi's for sunny spacious Pporter Square Camb. home. Non-smoke, min. drugs/alc. Great women, great location. \$350-plus. 491-4005 (2)

WOBURN

Roomate wanted non-smoker, no drugs or alcohol. Rent \$315 includes heat and utilities. Cat o.k. Call 932-6318. Available July 1st. (2)

JAMAICA PLAIN

2LF's plus cat seek F to share spacious 3BR apt. near pond, Arboretum and t. No smokers or pets. Min. alcohol. Avail 8-1. 365-plus. 983-0373. (4)

APARTMENTS

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5 rooms, 2 BRs, modern kitchen, roof deck, w/d, near T, garage. Many nice features. Avail 8/1. No fee. \$850. (508) 694-1089. (47)

LOVELY PARK DR. APT.

Sunny studio with museum and park views. Completely renovated, separate kitchen. No fee. Available Aug. 1/15. \$600/mo includes heat, hot water, gas. 536-8898. (3)

Dorchester, 5 rm (2BR) nr T & X-way, quiet area. \$750 no ht/utilities. 265-8693. (2)

Dorchester: Melville Park, large 6 room, 3 bedroom 2nd floor apartment. Near T, 2 porches, washer dryer, large kitchen, storage. \$825/month. No utilities. 825-0252 or 255-9738. (3)

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2 BR 3rd floor apt. Avail July 15th. 800.00-plus. Skylights, piano, weird wallpaper but nice. Call Chevy 524-6121. Leave message. (3)

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3 bedroom, 6 rooms, porch skylights, new bath, easy to heat. Davis Square Somerville. \$900 plus utilities. Avail. immediately. Call Barbara 776-9701 or Cheryl 666-0403. (3)

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1 Bedroom, 1 1/2 baths, livingroom, full kitchen, sleeps four, Provincetown, Aug 25-Sept 1, \$700. Call 408-479-4891. (3)

CAMBRIDGE — 1 BD RM

1 Bd Rm apt with private yard and off street parking, Cambridge port, \$775/mo, one year lease from Aug 1. Call 661-2083. (2)

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— an irreverent political semi-coop with dykes, or maybe fags, near the T. Starting 8/1? Vegetarian? Under \$280 for rent? What more could a girl ask for? If your house is the one of my derams, or close, call Rebecca at 524-0821. (2)

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ORGANIZATIONS

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Social and support group for women over 40. P.O. Box 1214, East Arlington, MA 02174. (15.48)

BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

Multiracial group for all people. Call (415) 431-1976 or write BWMT, suite 140, 584 Castro St. SF, CA, 94114. (16.1)

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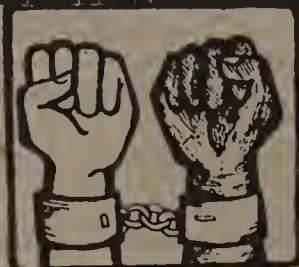
Social support group for youth 22 and under. Wed. night general meeting from 7:30-9pm. New persons meeting at 6:00. Women's meeting at 6:45. Call 1-800-42-BAGLY for info. (15.32)

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Intergenerational Love Support Group. World wide news, art, opinions. Application, information free. Bulletin \$1.00 NAMBLA, P.O. Box 174, New York, NY 10018 (7)

Prisoners Seeking Friends

IF YOU WANT PEACE, WORK FOR JUSTICE



BLACK & WHITE MEN TOGETHER is a gay men's organization for men of all colors. They have groups in many cities. They don't always have prisoner support projects, but they should, no? So drop them a line and encourage them to get involved and help fight racism in the Amerikkkan prison business. For more info write: BWMT, 584 Castro St, San Francisco CA 94114, or MACTA (Men of All Colors Together), Box 148, New York, NY 10023.

INTERRACIAL RELATIONSHIPS —

Quarterly Interchange, a new journal, provides all men with a forum for developing interracial and cross cultural relationships. \$10 per ad of 40 words or less. Address: Q.I., Box 42502, San Francisco CA 94101.

Cards for PWAs in prison: Please consider dropping a get well card to: James Crosby ('Jazz'), 977 Camp Rd, Salisbury NC 28144. Thanks.



PRISONERS & PENPALS:

You write GCN often, frustrated that you have sometimes written other prisoners and not gotten even a polite 'no, I don't want to write, thank you.' Nothing.

Well, remember, there are several prisons out there with rules against prisoners writing each other, and there are some without such rules, but where the mailroom people are against it so they just "lose" the mail. So that prisoner may not even KNOW that you have written! So, it is not always just plain 'rudeness' (by the prisoner)!

We don't talk about this too often because we don't want to discourage you all from at least TRYING to contact & support each other and form friendships. We apologize for the postage that has been 'wasted' sometimes.

We hope the friendships that HAVE worked out make up for it.

THEN, Prisoners writing people outside: Some of you seem to think that ALL the gay men and lesbians in the country read GCN and so when you don't get a penpal, it means you've been rejected by EVERYBODY!! Well, actually we are a rather SMALL (circulation) newspaper, not read by tens of thousands of people. We say this for 2 reasons: one is so you don't feel so bad about the 'whole community' when you don't get the kind of friendship you're hoping for, and the second reason is that more if more newspaper put in penpals ads, more of the people out here would see them and more friendships and other (job-housing-etc) connections would be made. Watch this column for addresses of other gay newspapers, nationally or in your area, who you can write to and try persuading them that you are part of the 'community' too and deserve at least a small amount of space!

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Attractive 28 yr old LF seeks companion upon release. Late September. I'm financially secure and can relocate. Love arts, reading and openness. Please include photo for same. J. SIMPSON, E-60403, (120-1-30-U), Box 9, Avenal CA 93204.

I'm 21, and have 2 children, but I prefer women. I enjoy all kinds of sports and one of my hobbies is to rebuild antique cars as well as other models. I'm romantic and like to show my feelings. Kelly HERMEQ, 4122-215, KCIW, Pewee Valley KY 40056.



I'd like to meet people who are willing to share ideas and are sensitive to others feelings. My interests include drawing, reading, horses, volleyball, and music. Stephen BENWELL, E-25034, Box W (2-A3-27), Represa CA 95671.

Sincere individual seeks correspondence to share interests and ideals. I love literature, music, sports and discussing world affairs. I'm 34, honey complexioned, Creole and have varied sexual tastes. Darrell JAMESON, 170-895, Box 300, Orient OH 43146.

Would like to hear from Blacks, either inside or outside prison. Seek friendship and more. Picture will get picture. If Polaroid, cut the top open, so you can look inside. Will respond to all who write as I am for real lonely. Richard POORMAN, 97168, (6-J-2), Box 128, Eddyville KY 42038.

Looking for a loving person on the streets. I'm about to get out and will relocate if warranted. Interests include swimming, outdoors, and cuddling. Larry MUNDT, 426849, Rt 4 Box 1200, Rosharon TX 77583.

Bisexual anarchist seeking photos and letters from the Gay family, including transsexuals, TVs (Drag queens), all races, ages and builds. I have lost contact with C. LAMSON, M. TURNER, and C. HULL. Please write, any of you all. Bruce WEATHERS, 32992-138, Box 1000, Otisville NY 10963.

Looking for a friend. I like drawing, fishing, baseball, and basketball. Timothy HURLEY, C-32250, STU-382L, Box 500, CHINO CA 91708.

Dear GCN, thank you for everything. I would like somebody to write me, so please put my name in your Prisoner Seeking Friends. Thank you. Robert Lee ANDERSON, EF-166918, 10B, 3001 Gordon Hwy, Grovetown GA 30813.

Dominant Gay American Indian, jet black hair, sky blue eyes, seeking friends. My hobbies are bodybuilding, martial arts, writing and computer sciences. Jerry WALKER, 470151, Ellis II, Huntsville TX 77340.

I'm a black man seeking penpals. If anyone is interested in writing, I'll respond to all. I also can write other prisoners as well. Andrew DAVIS, EF-120573 (K-2-10), GSP, Reidsville GA 30499.

I'm looking for a true friend to correspond with. I'm very lonely and not looking for hand-outs. Every letter will be answered. I'm into soft rock and good books. Joseph RODRIGUEZ, 88T 2450, Box 149, Attica NY 14011.

I used to read your paper in another prison, but they moved me and these prisoners up north here don't even know what GCN is! We have it bad here. Last week guards beat up a gay man because he got upset when they said his lover couldn't visit him. I sure hope there will be someone out there who will like to write me and keep in touch. I don't want headgames, just friendship. Thank you, Kevin BERRY, 191324, Box 779, Marquette MI 49855.

Hairstylist, into jazz and some sports, would like a friendly penpal. Please write. Charles YODER, Box 900, Portage WI 53901.

I've been in prison for the last 15 years and hope (expect) to be getting out in the next year. I'd like to establish some friendly realtions before I get out so I'll know someone who might help me readjust back to the Free World. I don't doubt that I'd be a Great Friend to whoever contacts me. I'm 36, love music, dogs, fishing, and meeting interesting people. Alfred B. GILLIS, 031904 (DD-6), Box 500, Olustee FL 32072.

Calendar

Boston • Midsummer's Night Lesbian and Gay Poetry Reading. Sponsored by PWA Coalition News. Featuring Charley Shively, Jane Barnes, Patricia Roth Schwartz (pictured right) and Walta Borawski (pictured right). The Boston Living Center. YWCA. 140 Clarendon St. 8pm.

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged. Please specify if event is or is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings and put each event on a separate sheet. All listings must be typed. Please note that listings are printed only as space allows. We regret that we cannot print every submission. No phone calls, please!

14 SATURDAY

Springfield • North East Gay and Lesbian Country Dance Jamboree. Contra, folk and square dance. 12pm-9:30pm. For info 625-6732.

Cambridge • Women's Writing Group. at the Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 12-2pm. For info 354-8807.

Boston • Clean and Sober Dance. For the lesbian and gay community. YWCA. 140 Clarendon St. 9pm-1am. \$5.

Boston • Glrth and Mirth of New England. Monthly social. The Center. 338 Newbury St. 8-11pm. \$4, \$6. For info 387-0762.

15 SUNDAY

Watertown • The Neighborhood Picnic: GLOW, GLOSS, and WOW Potluck Picnic. All welcome. 12pm. For info 395-4664.

Jamalca Plain • Sunday Brunch with JP Neighbors. Doyle's Cafe. Washington St. 11am. For info 524-8070.

Littleton • WOBBLES: West of Boston Lesbians Cookout and Swimming Party. For info (508)386-7737.

16 MONDAY

Boston • Women's Issues Forum. Sponsored by Mass. Women's Political Caucus and Women's State-wide Legislative Network. Gardner Auditorium in the State House. 5:45pm. For info 451-9294.

Boston • HIV testing: The Whys, Wheres and How-tos at Clinical Partners, 321 Columbus Ave. For info 536-5950.

17 TUESDAY

Boston • Healing Service for All Affected by AIDS. at Old South Church. Copley Square. ASL interpreted. 7:30pm. For info 628-7665.

Boston • Gay Fathers of Greater Boston Meeting. Topic: Gay Dynamics--What makes a gay relationship work? at Lindemann Center. 25 Staniford St. 8-10pm. For info 742-7897.

Boston • Gay Sushl Lovers Social. at local Japanese restaurant. 7:30pm. For info (508)683-0841.

18 WEDNESDAY

Boston • Downtown Lesbian Lunch Time Boat Cruise. Meet at red ticket booth. 12:10pm. \$1. For info 725-3562.

Boston • N.E. Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans. Membership meeting. The Center. 338 Newbury St. 7:30-9:30pm. For more info 723-8127.

Boston • Forum/Discussion on The 6th International Conference on AIDS. Find out what it means for you. RAAB Auditorium, Boston Public Library. 7-9pm. For more info 695-1213.

19 THURSDAY

Boston • HCHP Patient Advocacy Union. AIDS Action Committee. 131 Clarendon St. 7pm. For more info 864-9596.

20 FRIDAY

Boston • Midsummer Night's Lesbian and Gay Poetry Reading. Featuring Charley Shively, Patricia Roth Schwartz, Walta Borawski and Jane Barnes. The Boston Living Center, 7th fl. 140 Clarendon St. 8pm. (see above)

21 SATURDAY

Boston • South End Family Field Day. Sponsored by SUN: South-End Unified Neighbors. Featuring softball: gay men and lesbians of Beantown Softball vs. a team from Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion. at Carter field. Columbus Ave. 10am-2pm. For info 426-1553

Boston • Pink Flamingos. Transvestites, Transexuals and Cross-dressers of New England. First Meeting. at The Center. 338 Newbury St. 4-6pm.

Boston • Prime Timers. Monthly Meeting. A celebration of gay poets. at Lindemann Center. 25 Staniford St. 2-4pm. \$1.

22 SUNDAY

Boston • Chlltern Mountain Club. Mt. Washington Hike. 11 miles. For info (803)644-7658.

23 MONDAY

Boston • A Positive Test Result: Now What? Sponsored by Clinical Partners. at 321 Columbus Ave. For info 536-5950.

24 TUESDAY

Boston • Buddy Program Orientation.. AIDS Action committee. 131 Clarendon St. 7:30pm. For info 437-6200 x450.

28 SATURDAY

Boston • The Dance. For all affected by HIV. Boston Living Center. 140 Clarendon St. 9pm-1am. For info 236-1012.

Dorchester • Summer Psychedelic Shack! Celebration sponsored by GALA. Awards for best' 60s costumes. At Terry M's. 8pm-2am.

WEEKLY EVENTS

SATURDAY

Boston • Gay Boston, with Jim Voltz. Boston Neighborhood Network, channels A3 and A8. 7:30-8pm.

Boston • Lesbian Fun and Games. smoke and alcohol free. at The Center. 338 Newbury St. 7-10pm \$2 donation. The third Saturday of the month.

Cambridge • Single Mothers' Support Group. Free drop-in group with child care and snacks on alternate Sat. at Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 11am-12:30pm. For info 354-8807.

SUNDAY

Boston • The Gay Dating Show, WUNR 1600 AM. 10:30pm-2:30am. Lesbians and gay men.

Boston • ALATEEN Group open to lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, 22 and under. 338 Newbury Street, rm. 202k. 6pm-7:30pm. Dave, 629-2518 or Frank, 666-8912.



Somerville • GLOSS:Gays and Lesbians of Somerville and Surroundings. Monthly potluck. 71 Union Sq. 6pm. First Sunday of each month. For more info Lisa 628-2532.

Beverly • North Shore Lesbian/Gay Parenting Support Group. Meets 1st Sun. of each month. at First Parish Unitarian Church. 225 Cabot St. 6:30-8pm. For info 593-5252.

MONDAY

Boston n Monday Night Rap Group. Talk to others living with HIV. 38 Appleton St. 7:30-9pm. For info 694-0964.

Boston • Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights holds bi-weekly planning meeting. The Center, 338 Newbury Street. 7pm. 776-6956.

Worcester • Aids Project Worcester. A support group for family, friends, concerned others dealing with HIV. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30pm. For info (508)755-3773.

Cambridge • Lesbian Rap Group. The Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 8-10pm. For info 354-8807.

TUESDAY

Boston • Gay Fathers of Greater Boston meet 1st and 3rd Tues. of the month. At Lindemann Ctr., 2nd fl. 8-10pm. 742-7897.

Boston • Lesbian and Gay Freedom Trail Band Rehearsals. No audition necessary. At Mass College of Art. Longwood and Brookline Ave. 7:15pm. For info 266-0628.

Providence, RI • ACT UP/Rhode Island Call for meeting place (401) 461-4191.

Boston • ACT UP/Boston meets to confront the AIDS crisis. The Living Center, YWCA, 140 Clarendon St. 7pm. 49-ACT UP.

Cambridge • 30+ Lesbian Rap Topics : The Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 7-8:30. For info 354-8807.

Cambridge • Women For Sobriety, a self help group for women recovering from addictions. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-9:30pm. 354-8807.

Arlington • Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays meets on the second Tuesday of every month at First Parish Unitarian Church, 630 Mass. Ave. 7:15pm. Info: 547-2440 or 508/562-5807.

Boston • Boston Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays. 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month. Harriet Tubman House. 6:30pm. For info 825-2610.

Worcester • Support Group for HIV+ Gay/Bisexual Men and Their Significant Others. Closed meeting. at AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30pm. For info (508) 755-3773.

Framingham • Framingham Gay and Lesbian Youth Group. People 22 and under, meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday. Civic League Bldg. 214 Concord St. 6-7:30pm. For info write P.O. Box 426, 5.Framingham, MA 01701

WEDNESDAY

Springfield • Names Project Meeting. New Chapter with weekly quilting meetings. All welcome. at Frontier. 19 Pearl St. 7-10pm. For Info (413)788-7459

Boston • Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth. Open to youth age 22 and under. at 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6pm women and men meet separately 6:45-7:30 general meeting at 7:30pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

Framingham • Framingham Gay and Lesbian Youth Group. Open to youth age 22 and under. Meets 1st and 3rd Tues. of each month. at Civic League Building. 214 Concord St. 6-7:30pm.

Worcester • Supporters of Worcester Area Gay and Lesbian Youth. Open to gay and bisexual youth 21 and under.meets 1st and third Wednesday of month at United Congregational Church. 6 Institute Rd. 7pm For info (508) 755-0005.

Worcester • Support Group for HIV+ who are In Substance Abuse Recovery. Closed meeting. at AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7:30-9pm. For info (508) 755-3773.

Cambridge • Say It, Sister! News Radio Show on WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7/18: Surprise Show with Amy Sands. 8-9pm.

Cambridge • Lesbian Al-Anon with child care, wheelchair accessible. at Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 6:30-8pm. For info 354-8807.

THURSDAY

Boston • The Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights. Meets alternating Thursdays. at The Center, rm 202K. 338 Newbury St. 6:30-8pm. For info 828-3039.

Northampton • Valley Gay Alliance meets 1st, 3rd Th. every month, basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30pm. (413) 527-5310.

Boston • Boston Area Rape Crisis Center drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

Boston • GLAAD: Boston Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. General meetings: 2nd Thursday of the month. The Center rm 202. 338 Newbury St.# For info 492-4639.

Dorchester • Gay and Lesbian Concerns Committee of SEIU Local 509. Meets 2nd Thurs. of each month. At Union Office. 5 Howard Johnson Plaza. 6:30pm. For info 282-2509.

FRIDAY

Boston • Women In Black. Demonstrate outside Israeli Consulate in support of the Palestinian right to statehood. Statler Bldg. Near Arlington St. Station. 1st Friday of every month. 12:30-1:30pm. For info 723-6327.

Watertown • GLOW: Gays and Lesbians of Watertown. For more info 395-4664.

Brookline • "Swingtime." Lesbian, gay bisexual swing dance lessons. First Friday of the month. 185 Corey Rd. 8:30-9:15. \$4. For info 661-1792.

Boston • Classic Films On Super 8 Film. at The Boston Living Center. 140 Clarendon St. free. For info 236-1012.

Boston • Film/Video Series. Screenings with discussion. 7/20: "The Women" 7/27 "What if I'm Gay?". The Center. 338 Newbury St. 8pm. For info 247-2927

By Chris Nealon

SAN FRANCISCO — In a two-week period bursting with historic significance — from the smooth progress of the controversial Sixth International Conference on AIDS to the arrival in San Francisco of Nelson Mandela — gay men of color and their white allies made some history of their own last week. The National Association of Black and White Men Together (BWMT) held its 10th annual convention here June 24-30, an event that gay activists of color say heralds a new stage in community building.

"It was very successful," said Tim Isbell, who coordinated the convention. The gathering, organized under the theme "Family: The Seed Grows," was attended by about 290 delegates and staff from around the world, Isbell told *GCN*. The seven-day schedule listed 32 different workshops and panel discussions on a wide variety of topics, from "Gay Life in Brasil" to "Getting Beyond the Bar Door: Political Activism in the '90s." Convention organizers also packed the week with membership meetings, caucuses and social events, including art shows, talent shows, and a screening of *Tongues Untied*, a video by Black gay artist Marlon Riggs that examines intimacy between Black men as well as between Black and white men.

This year's event was significantly larger than last year's BWMT convention in Tallahassee, Isbell said. He also remarked that while earlier BWMT conventions have run from three to four days, the 1990 gathering was the first to include a full week of events. Organizers said, however, that the most striking thing about this year's convention was the diversity of those attending.

A variety of backgrounds

"We learned a lot about cultural differences," said John Teemer, a co-chair of the national BWMT chapter. Teemer told *GCN* that different gay communities of color existed in widely varying contexts. For instance, he said, "There are 300 different Indian tribes" in the Bay Area, and gay Native American men "are not a monolithic group." Meanwhile, Teemer added, men attending the conference from Brazil said that race in their country exists along a whole spectrum of skin color, so that "the lighter

A decade of Black and White Men Together

A full week of activities in San Francisco highlights the group's annual convention



Graphic from early BWMT ad

you are, the closer you are to economic privilege."

Isbell said he was especially pleased that men from Scandinavian countries were able to attend the convention, too. "There are not many people of color in their countries," he said. "[The convention] was a chance for them to share in a multicultural experience."

Sexual politics, racial politics

One of the major topics at the convention was how to conduct AIDS outreach to gay men of color in the face of multiple prejudices, Teemer said, remarking that "homophobia in different ethnic communi-

ties and racism in the gay community have both impeded education" about AIDS.

John Bush, a founder of Men of All Colors Together (MACT)/ Boston, a chapter of BWMT, told *GCN* that "we were almost spontaneously educated, if you will, [at the convention] on the need to continue our AIDS work. So *many* people in the organization are sick with AIDS or are HIV positive."

BWMT made national news earlier in June with the release of the results of its study on Black gay men and AIDS. Of the 952 Black gay men interviewed for the study, fewer than half had attended a safer sex workshop, and slightly more had attended

AIDS education programs, according to the *New York Times*.

Bush said that the survey, although widely considered a success, was the source of some tension during the gathering. Some gay men of color who spoke at a forum entitled "BWMT Faces Its Critics" were angry that BWMT, which is not an all-Black organization, would presume to conduct an all-Black survey. There was a feeling, Bush said, that "the group really has no right to speak to what is needed in Black communities."

Teemer said that another point of contention surrounding mixed-race interaction was the issue of bi-racial sexual relationships. Some Black men, he said, perceive Black men who sleep with white men "to be less Black" than those who sleep primarily with Black men. Critics of BWMT accused Black men who were involved with white men of "race-hatred and self-hatred," said Teemer.

Bush remarked, however, that BWMT has provided a forum for Black men to get to know each other as well as to befriend white men. "Many Black men have learned to love and respect Black men that they would not have met outside this organization," he said.

Teemer agreed, saying that "when I arrived at BWMT, I had few Black friends, but now I have many, many Black friends in the gay community."

Unfinished business

Although convention attendees and organizers agree that the week of events provided a rare chance to discuss cross-racial issues as well as those specific to men of various colors, they also said that the convention revealed how much work is left to be done in the gay community where race is concerned.

Lee Woo, who chairs the new Oakland chapter of MACT, said he thought that gay organizations of color "need to become much more collaborative." He told *GCN* he thought that the racial complexity of many communities will lead BWMT in a more "multicultural" direction.

Isbell said he thought "white gays and lesbians really need to be supportive" of gay

Continued on page 11

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